



Arlington Disability Commission Minutes

Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Time: 4:00pm

Location: Conducted by Hybrid Participation

Attendees: Grace Carpenter, Paul Raia, Paul Parravano, Ileana Gatica, Cynthia DeAngelis, Kerrie Fallon, Kari Sasportas, Janice Cagan-Teuber

Guests: Tim Ross, Teresa Marzilli, Ellen Leigh, Rebecca Gruber

Absentee: Michael Rademacher

Agenda

1. Call to Order, Read Ground Rules, Welcome
2. Ground rules
 - a. [Please don't use Zoom chat/messaging during the meeting, unless that is your primary way to participate in a meeting. The co-chairs have disabilities that make it hard to deal with Zoom chat/messaging]
3. Approve Draft July Meeting Minutes
 - a. Cagan-Teuber moved to approve, seconded by DeAngelis, unanimous approval.
4. Guest Introductions
5. DEI Update (5 min)
 - a. Jill Harvey is taking a leave of absence, returning Tuesday October 10th
 - b. Tim and Teresa to split responsibilities until Jill is back
6. True Story Theater
 - a. Christopher from True Story Theater will be submitting a proposal to cultural council (ACAC), asked if the commission would like to co-sponsor the event.
 - b. Did 3 shows last year, one on invisible disabilities, will focus on neurodiversity in the future.
 - c. Co-sponsorship would require one point person from the committee to work with production, advertise through social media/newsletter, and donate to the proposal (\$500 has been donated previously).
 - d. Gatica asked about highlighting ableism in one of the productions.
 - e. Sasportas expressed interest in working with TST.
 - f. DeAngelis motioned to fund \$500 and cosponsor the event, Fallon seconded, unanimous approval.
7. Town Day (20 min)
 - a. Cynthia will offer guidance on Special Education info.
 - b. Sign up sheet has been sent out.
 - c. Floating beach wheelchair will be on display.
 - d. Gatica will bring material from Perkins.

8. Commission Leadership (20 min)
 - a. Carpenter stated she, Raia, and Parravano have been chairs for 3 years and it is overdue for a change in leadership.
 - b. DeAngelis stated in the bylaw chair terms are for two years. Interested candidates should reach out to Tim and we can vote next month.
 - c. Sasportas expressed interest.
9. MBTA Communities (10 min)
 - a. October 2 next meeting, ARB will deliberate and vote. Community Center, first floor.
 - i. Legislation passed that requires 177 communities in MA to find areas in their municipalities to change zoning to allow multifamily housing to be built by right. As of now multifamily housing is only allowed in a small part of Arlington. Legislation was developed to address the housing crisis. Arlington has not been affordable for many years.
 - b. DeAngelis asked the commission if they would like to write a letter to ARB about making sure all meetings are hybrid. The threshold should not be minimum ADA requirements, all residents should be able to participate. Asked if meetings can be held at the High School?
 - c. Fallon noted that there is legislation in the state to require all public meetings be hybrid.
 - d. Sasportas noted that ADA addresses minimum accessibility, but that the commission is in a position to go above and beyond that. Need to think about access more broadly. Reasonable accommodation process can be intimidating for some folks wanting to request a hybrid meeting. This is a systemic issue that can be tackled. Proposed a policy working group to break issues down and address them over time.
 - e. Parravano stated this is a perfect opportunity to raise the issue of how hybrid meetings are important for access.
 - f. Teresa Marzilli stated there are room constraints to holding hybrid meeting (HVAC noise, echoes) in the first floor community center. Some commissions are entirely remote or in person, there are some issues with the hybrid format.
 - g. Carpenter asked for a volunteer to write an initial draft of a letter.
 - i. Sasportas volunteered to work on it with someone.
10. MOD Grant (10 min)
 - a. Submitted last Friday, MOD will notify recipients of funds awarded by mid-November
 - b. Project grant to build secured covered bike storage next to Ed Burns Arena.
 - c. Storage for residents with recumbent or adaptive bicycles as well as recumbent bicycles for rent to be used on Minuteman or Hills Hill mountain biking trails.
11. Mini Grant (\$18,000) (20 min)
 - a. Proposals are due October 12, 2023.
 - b. Focus is on recreation activity and employment for disabled residents.
 - c. Potential project – design for HP parking to be included at Robbins Farm Playground.
 - d. DeAngelis stated transition specialists are hired by the high school to help 18-22 year olds with secondary education.
 - e. Sasportas mentioned mentorship for Town employees.
12. Understanding Our Differences (10 min)
 - a. Gatica stated APS did not budget for UOD. Asked if commission can speak to someone at APS or write a letter of support for this program.

- b. Sarah Forster said program is funded through AEF. When formal budget came out there was no line item for the program. Still a need for someone to run the program. Thinks it would be a good idea to reach out to Margaret (DEI for schools).
- 13. Town Override November 7th (10 min)
- 14. Subcommittee reports (10 min)
 - a. DEI
 - i. Jill out until 10/10
 - ii. Language Access work continuing
 - b. DPW
 - c. Outreach Working Group
 - i. Social Media
 - d. Recreation
 - i. CODA
 - 1. Carpenter attended meeting. Stated there is a lot of interest from other communities with increasing recreation activities for disabled residents.
- 15. Correspondences (10 min)
- 16. Public Comment
- 17. Next meeting Wednesday October 18, 2023 at 4PM
 - a. Raia motioned to end the meeting, Cagan-Teuber seconded
- 18. Closing

Commission members not able to attend please email dei@town.arlington.ma.us prior to the scheduled meeting.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact dei@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.